
Artemether-Lumefantrine (e.g., Coartem®) 20/120 **Prescription Guide**

Drug Class

- **Class:** Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy (ACT)
- **Components:**
 - **Artemether** (fast-acting)
 - **Lumefantrine** (long-acting)

Target Use

- **Indication:** Treatment of uncomplicated *Plasmodium falciparum* malaria
- **Not recommended for:**
 - Severe malaria (requires IV therapy)
 - Malaria in the first trimester of pregnancy (except when no alternatives)
 - Prophylaxis

Dosage Instructions (Per Age/Weight Group)

Age / Weight Group	Total Number of Tablets	Dose Timing
5–14 kg (<3 years)	1 tablet per dose	6 doses: Time 0, 8h, 24h, 36h, 48h, 60h

15–24 kg (3–7 years)	2 tablets per dose	Same as above
25–34 kg (8–11 years)	3 tablets per dose	Same as above
≥35 kg (≥12 years & adults)	4 tablets per dose making 80/480 in total	Same as above

Dosing Schedule:

- **1st Dose:** Time 0 (as soon as malaria is diagnosed)
- **2nd Dose:** 8 hours after first dose
- **3rd Dose:** 24 hours after first dose
- **4th Dose:** 36 hours after first dose
- **5th Dose:** 48 hours after first dose
- **6th Dose:** 60 hours after first dose

Administration Tips

- **Take with fatty food** or milk to improve absorption (especially Lumefantrine)
- If vomiting occurs within **1 hour**, repeat the dose

Important Patient Instructions

- **Complete all doses** even if symptoms improve
 - **Do not take with antacids or magnesium supplements**
 - **Avoid grapefruit juice** – it interferes with metabolism
 - **Avoid missed doses** – this increases resistance risk
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Mechanism of Action

- **Artemether:** Fast-acting; disrupts parasite metabolism via free radicals
 - **Lumefantrine:** Long-acting; inhibits parasite growth over time
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Common Side Effects

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Sleep disorders
- Nausea or vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Palpitations (rare)

 Seek medical help if:

- Severe vomiting or diarrhea persists
 - Signs of allergic reaction (rash, swelling, breathing difficulty)
 - Irregular heartbeat or fainting
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Special Considerations

- **Pregnancy:** Avoid in 1st trimester unless no alternatives
- **Breastfeeding:** Generally considered safe
- **Drug Interactions:**

- CYP3A4 inducers/inhibitors (e.g. Rifampicin, Ketoconazole)
 - QT-prolonging drugs (e.g. Erythromycin, some antipsychotics)
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DIHYDROARTEMISININ/PIPERAQUINE

40 mg DHA/320 mg PPQ tablets Prescription Guide

Therapeutic action

Antimalarial

Indications

Treatment of uncomplicated falciparum malaria

Treatment of uncomplicated malaria due to other Plasmodium species, when chloroquine cannot be used

Completion treatment following parenteral therapy for severe malaria

Forms and strengths

Co-formulated tablets of dihydroartemisinin (DHA)/piperaquine (PPQ), in blister pack, for a complete treatment for one individual

There are 5 different blister packs:

20 mg DHA/160 mg PPQ tablets	blister pack of 3 tablets
40 mg DHA/320 mg PPQ tablets	blister pack of 3 tablets
40 mg DHA/320 mg PPQ tablets	blister pack of 6 tablets
40 mg DHA/320 mg PPQ tablets	blister pack of 9 tablets
40 mg DHA/320 mg PPQ tablets	blister pack of 12 tablets

Dosage and duration

Child 5 to < 25 kg: 2.5 to 10 mg/kg daily of DHA + 20 to 32 mg/kg daily of PPQ

Child 25 kg and over and adult: 2 to 10 mg/kg daily of DHA + 16 to 27 mg/kg daily of PPQ

Weight	20 mg/160 mg tablet	40 mg/320 mg tablet
5 to < 8 kg	1 tab	—
8 to < 11 kg	1½ tab	—
11 to < 17 kg	—	1 tab
17 to < 25 kg	—	1½ tab
25 to < 36 kg	—	2 tab
36 to < 60 kg	—	3 tab
60 to < 80 kg	—	4 tab
≥ 80 kg	—	5 tab

Tablets are to be taken once daily for 3 days.

Contra-indications, adverse effects, precautions

Do not administer in the event of cardiac disorders (bradycardia, heart rhythm disorders, congestive heart failure).

Do not combine with drugs that prolong the QT interval: amiodarone, other antimalarials, antipsychotics, fluconazole, fluoroquinolones, hydroxyzine, macrolides, ondansetron, etc.

Administer with caution to patients > 60 years or with renal or hepatic impairment.

May cause: cardiac disorders (QT prolongation, tachycardia); rarely, gastrointestinal disturbances, pruritus, hepatic disorders, joint and muscle pain.

Monitor combination with: antiretrovirals (increased blood levels of these drugs), enzymes inducers such as rifampicin, carbamazepine, phenytoin, phenobarbital (reduced blood levels of DHA/PPQ).

If the patient vomits within 30 minutes after administration, re-administer the full dose. If the patient vomits between 30 minutes and 1 hour after administration, re-administer half of the dose.

Pregnancy: no contra-indication

Breast-feeding: no contra-indication

Remarks

Take 3 hours before or after meals, with a glass of water.
The tablets may be crushed and mixed with water.

Storage

- - Below 25 °C